20 years of Black Flag!

No. 191

BLACK FLAG

30p

FOR ANARCHIST RESISTANCE

MAY 1st '89

1000's ESCAPE POLL TAX REGISTRATION

IN ENGLAND and Wales the Poll Tax registration has begun and efforts will be made to register every adult over the next few months. The Government hopes that fear of fines for non-compliance will result in any resistance being minimised. But the news from Scotland is more than hopeful: despite attempts by Government sources and the media to cover-up the extent of the resistance it is now emerging that upwards of 100,000 Scots have managed to avoid registration. Furthermore, only a tiny percentage of the refuseniks have been identified and even less have been fined. Their message to those of us south of the border is simple: Don't register!

There are many important lessons to be learnt from the Scottish campaign. Perhaps the most important—and comrades in Scotland readily admit to this mistake—is that simply trying to delay registration may well delay the whole process but registration will still go ahead. Instead, our Scottish comrades advise that delaying tactics should be replaced by something a lot more basic: when the registration form is received, Don't Delay, Throw It Away!

The forms are being sent out now. People who acknowledge them in any way will eventually be registered. Those who ignore it stand a far better chance of avoiding registration altogether. It is vital that this message is spread everywhere, throughout the country.

The precise information from Scotland is that in Strathclyde (which includes the Glasgow area) over 50,000 have apparently succeeded in not registering, while in Lothian (which includes the Edinburgh area) the figure is allegedly as many as 60,000. What's more it is believed that only around 100 people have been fined for non-compliance—and, significantly, in all cases these have been people who have entered into correspondence with the Poll Tax authorities. The fact of the situation is that although the registration period is well and truly over (it ended last October) over 100,000 Scots will escape paying the tax altogether.

That figure could easily be multiplied in England and Wales if we all take the advice of our friends north of the border.

FORCED REGISTRATION

But if registration seems unavoidable—and for many this will certainly be the case—all is by no means lost.

Some councils, such as the borough of Lambeth for example, have stated that they will only refer to the existing Rates lists and the Electoral Roll for names of people liable for payment (whether they keep to this policy is another matter). Other councils may well be following such a mimimalist approach—not necessarily for political reasons but because of costs. Lambeth will only be spending £2 million on the Poll Tax registration and collection system, because £2 million is all they got in funds from Central Government towards costs—yet it has been estimated that it will cost the council £5 million to run it properly. Clearly many corners will be cut and councils up and down the country will be in the same position.

Most councils will rely on people's natural fear that the authorities will be able to locate them through a Big Brother system of cross-referencing. In theory this is very possible, but in practice the costs involved make such exhaustive tracking unfeasible. Forced registration cannot necessarily be assumed even in most cases.

For claimants the situation is, unfortunately, very different. Registration will be virtually automatic. But the good news is that there's a loophole, discovered by activists in Scotland. Claimants are expected to pay around 20% of the tax (the 80% rebate is based on the national average and therefore some claimants will end up paying more, depending on where they live) but if they refuse to pay this the tax is forcibly deducted out of each giro by installments. However, for some strange reason the installments work out less than the 20%, so it's actually cheaper, week by week, to pay the tax forcibly than voluntarily!

For everyone else forced registration may have to be faced up to if it happens—but even then there is still a lot that can be done to mess things up. It is important to remember, for example, that everyone is given to July to register, at which stage two warnings will be sent providing a total of 21 days to send the forms back. In Scotland the final registration period was extended for an extra four months because of all the delays. In the end it will be sheer numbers that count: if the system begins to break down then the whole thing will snowball.

If they virtually have all your details already, there is little of course that can be done at this stage anyway—except apply for a rebate Everyone is entitled to apply for a rebate, but not everyone of course will get one. Nevertheless apply for one anyway, as it all adds to the chaos. The important thing to remember if registration seems impossible to avoid is don't give them any bank details (they can't make you). Again, when it comes to non-payment time, if enough people who refuse to pay have avoided disclosing their bank then the authorities will have to go to a great deal of trouble to find out this information. Another tip: it has been learnt that keeping money in a building society (especially an obscure one) will make it that much more difficult for your account to be traced.

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE

THERE IS ONLY ONE CNT!

THE ANARCHIST movement in Spain took a major leap forward with the announcement that the reformist organisation that has spent the last ten years trying to destroy revolutionary anarcho-syndicalism has finally been forced to change tack. The phoney CNT is no more and the way has now been cleared for the genuine CNT, the CNT-AIT, the anarchist labour union, to take back its historic patrimony, its assets stolen by fascism and then State Socialism, and its archives.

The Ruling Class did all in its power to crush the CNT. It was made illegal. A special assault police was created against it. CNT activists were murdered. It took the brunt of the Civil War. It was betrayed by the very Republic it helped to defend. It was then subjected to the general genocide of the working class by the fascist victors. Its militants were imprisoned, exiled. Then, with its resurgence, the Ruling Class attempted to divide it.

But still it could not be crushed, even with a thirty year conspiracy of silence when it was assumed dead or dispersed.

After Franco it rose again. But a new tactic to destroy it was tried. Taking advantage of a genuine schism, initiated by reformists, it's enemies infiltrated the split-off faction and created a phoney CNT, preparing it for a major sell-out to capitalism so that the CNT could be absorbed into the system.

This tactic would only have worked had there not been widespread resistance both within Spain and internationally. But this was not the case and there was resistance. The apologists of reformism and the enemies of anarchism made light of the Split and gave credence to the infiltrators. They sneered when the matter came to the courts. But the end for the phoneys, when it came, was swift. The courts finally had to concede that there was indeed only one CNT. Without this decision it was inevitable that the phoneys would be fully exposed through their reformism, but with it the way is now clear for the genuine CNT to take back their assets. Within hours of the decision the phoneys announced that they had now taken the name CGT (Confederation of General Workers), a name that today is associated, in neighbouring France at least, with Communist Party led unionism. Meanwhile the CNT, the Spanish section of the International Workers Association, has appealed to all workers who left them in the original schism to rejoin them and to take up once more the banner of anarcho-syndicalism.

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For a social system based on mutual aid and voluntary co-operation — against state control and all forms of government and economic repression. To establish a share in the general prosperity for all — the breaking down of racial, religious, national and sexual barriers — and to fight for the life of one world.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!
With this issue we celebrate decades of *Black Flag*—twenty years of not just writing and speaking but practical organising. A very few of those now engaged in the production and activities around it have been in it from the beginning: some were scarcely out of the cradle when it started. A few have inevitably given way to burn-out, some have died, one has survived not just twenty years of *Black Flag* but over fifty years of struggle for the principles it fights for.

Q Isn't the new right-wing thinking on libertarianism, with its emphasis on freedom and opposition to State control, now popular among Tories, a practical form of anarchism (Statelessness)?

A The Tories have taken, largely from America, individualistic ideas which are correct in supposing the State to be obstructive, but as their notion of freedom from the State is capitalist exploitation, and of freedom within the State the rule of lawyers, they have to increase oppression to allow unbridled exploitation of human and natural resources to continue. Obviously they then have to increase authority. 'Extreme' right-wing individualists would let the State disappear so far as its restrictions on capitalism are concerned, but would still need a coercive arm to be used against the real producers of wealth. The goal would be a privatised State, to legalise private-government enforcement, not an abolished one, whatever they might say.

Marxist-Leninists also say they want the abolition of the State but they define the State as solely that oppressive arm which is used by the capitalist; they want to keep the rest of the authority process to maintain their political power. This is the other side of the coin from right wing libertarianism.

Both are more 'practical' then Anarchism insofar as that which exists is always more practical than something which doesn't yet exist.

The achievement of Anarchism has to be taken in a working-class context or it doesn't make sense. Lack of government control (lawlessness) isn't a panacea for a free society; to fill the vacuum left by absence of State or government. One needs a society in which all and each have access to and control of both economic and social life.

HOME NEWS

UNION HOLDS BACK ON DOCKS DISPUTE

THE PROPOSED abolition of the National Dock Labour Scheme and the threat of legal action by employers in the unlikely event that the docker's union, the TGWU, opts for strike action, has left dockers with little choice but to take direct control of the dispute and seek wider support. Already a redundancy package has been presented by the employers.

The Government are confident that the anti-trade union laws will continue to curb official action. Fear of breaking these sacred laws has encouraged the TGWU to back down from confrontation, but should the union leaders do an about turn they are still only expected to try and restrict action to the registerded ports. Government contingency plans to divert container and other essential traffic to non-registered ports is dependent on non-registered dockers scabbing but also underestimates the restricted facilities at those ports to handle certain cargo, particularly iron ore and grain. Even so the 40 registered ports handle more than 70% of docks traffic nationally.

Rows of 'straddle-carries' lying idle at Tilbury Docks after dockers stayed away in protest at plans to end the Dock Labour Scheme.

The unofficial action that heralded the beginning of the dispute saw around 5,000 dockers—more than half of those affected by the abolition of the Scheme—walk out, closing Liverpool, Tilbury and other ports. It is this sort of direct action that will determine the direction of the strike.

TUNNEL VISION

We have it on good, but unattributable authority, that the head of UCATT (the Builders union), Albert Williams, is involved in a blacklisting operation aimed in particular at former Kent miners. Williams' deal with Transmanche, the consortium building the Channel Tunnel, specified that UCATT would disrupt Transmanche work unless the firm set up a blacklist with the cooperation of the union. Apparently Williams wanted to specifically exclude any former Kent miners — many of whom applied for jobs with Transmanche — from work on the Tunnel because he feared that left-wingers could eventually take over the union in the south-east. Consequently, virtually none of the hundreds of well qualified miners who tried to get jobs on the Tunnel were accepted for work. Transmanche is one of the main subscibers to the Economic League, the blacklisting agency.

Blacklisting was again brought into the open recently when pickets, acting in solidarity with printworkers in Bradford, leafletted the offices of *the Observer* newspaper in London. Although *The Observer* has steadfastly campaigned against blacklisting and the work of the Economic League, it is ironic that their northern editions are printed by one of the Leagues supporters. The Telegraph & Argus Group of Bradford, the printers involved, is owned by Westminster Press, which insists the T & A continue its subsciption with the League. The SOGAT 82 (printers union) chapel at the T & A protested and called on wider support. At *The Observer* there were some red faces when the story got circulated and it is hoped that the paper will put pressure on the T & A to stop subscribing or lose its lucrative print contract.

Source: League Watch

N.B. Further information on League Watch will be published in a forthcoming edition of *Black Flag*.

Anarcho-Quiz

1. Tsarist Russia was based on slavery (serfdom) while Britain had been first to abolish the slave trade, so which sides in the American Civil War did each government logically support?
2. During the Depression there was an enormous falling-off in world demand for coffee from Brazil, so did ordinary Brazilians get it any cheaper?
3. Why did bacteriologist Robert Koch, who had earlier discovered the TB bacillus, unscientifically rush to announce (in 1890) he had discovered the remedy, with disastrous consequences?
4. Charged with setting fire to the Reichstag, Communist leader Dimitrov alleged van der Lubbe (who did set fire to it) was 'not a communist, nor even an anarchist, but a tool who has been misused by fascism'—what proofs did he adduce?
5. Where does the word 'fascism' come from?

ANSWERS ON BACK PAGE

DEFEND OUR OWN

ONE OF THE decisions made at the recent Anarchist Black Cross conference involved the revival of an international defence network as a means of providing physical and other support for revolutionary action and militant anarchists. The defence network will be known as the Emergency Response Network and will be open to all who support revolutionary action.

Local Black Cross groups will be looking to strengthen links internationally and mechanisms have been worked out to provide better, more effective, communication to assist in solidarity actions.

The Conference took place in Bradford and included Black Cross contacts from around Britain as well as ABC contacts from Greece and Canada.

The latest developments on the Murrays case (see separate article and letter) were presented to Conference and it was agreed that the campaign to get a release date for our two imprisoned comrades would be stepped up. The campaign would continue for as long as they are inside and until Noel and Marie are able to rejoin us.

The Conference also heard of the latest developments from Greece, where the ABC is active in prison struggles and in support of anti-state direct action. (An expanded version of the report from the Greek ABC is published elsewhere in this issue.)

Prisoner support work, it was emphasised, was only part of the work of the ABC; international defence is the other side. With the growing interest in Anarchism in Eastern Europe and in the USSR, with the revival of the anarcho-syndicalist movements in South America and the recent developments of that movement in Spain, and with the growth of revolutionary activity in countries like Greece, it is imperative that revolutionary anarchism acts as one.

The Black Cross will do whatever it can to extend solidarity action internationally and assist in the strengthening of international ties. This task cannot be underestimated and we urge comrades everwhere to support the ABC in this initiative.

THE NEW HUMANISTS

SINCE THE re-discovery of the word Humanist as a cover for scepticism, to denote an uncontroversial non-god-bashing atheism, many people have got into the act, including Christian and other religions even less savoury. After all, everybody claims to be pro-human, one supposes (we did say claims). Latest among the fun-run for Parliament parties is the Humanist Party, cashing in on the scepticism with politicians. It has no hope of winning power, but is putting up candidates in several European countries in the hope of advancing its aims, which are in reality advancing the well-heeled and obscurely financed cult called The Movement, or The Community, also known as Futuro Verde (Green Future) or The Greens (Los Verdes). It has no connection with the fun-running but unexceptionable Green Party (which exposes the Humanist Party in its paper Econews) nor with Greenpeace. It has more in common with the Moonies or similar cults, and was founded in Argentina by Mario Rodriguez Como, who seems to have an endless supply of money to fund the organisation. It was also exported to Spain, but the Humanist Party there is no longer: in fact its members decided to join en mass another organisation which had 'similar aims'. What is the name of that organisation? It is, in fact, the phoney CNT (Renovados). In Britain, we note that, in a council by-election in the London borough of Lewisham, a bogus 'Green' candidate (from the 'Independent Ecologist Party'), was entered with forged signatures of nominees and put up by the Deptford Young Tory chair David Furze. There seemed only a handful of votes in it, so he put up his friend (no longer) Angeline Verrillo without her knowledge or consent, hoping to split the Labour vote, and she (and the Labour Party) are hopping mad. (OK, who cares who stands, but that's what fun run and Phoneyism is all about).

N B. The National Front (Third Positionists) have set up a phoney enviromental organisation called Greenwave, conceived by Patrick Harrington . It has died a death.

INFILTRATORS UNMASKED!

SEVERAL AGENTS provocateur have been identified as being infiltrators of the animal rights movement in the USA and one has been exposed as an infiltrator at an inter-continental anarchist conference held in Canada. All this has come to light as a result of the entrapment of an animal rights activist who has subsequently been charged with attempted murder.

In November Fran Trutt was arrested during a police stake-out at the US Surgical Corporation. She was allegedly carrying a remote control for a bomb which had been placed inside the building, where the USSC employ 'stapling' techniques on dogs. Shortly afterwards Trutt's New York apartment was raided and police claimed to have found two more bombs as well as weapons. Trutt was then charged with possession of explosives and attempted murder (the bomb at USSC was placed near the parking spot of Leon Hirsch, the founder of the corporation).

It has since been revealed that Trutt was set up, or 'entrapped', by two people who posed as activists and friends. They, in fact, were employed by a security consultancy firm. Both encouraged Trutt in the action against USSC, and supplied her with the equipment and the necessary funds to carry it out. That company has been identified as Perceptions International. Furthermore this consultancy firm was actually hired by USSC to carry out infiltration. Leon Hirsch has since admitted that Trutt had been under surveillance by his sub-contracted operatives for at least two years. It is also known that Perceptions International operatives have infiltrated other groups and organisations, including Earth First!, the dubious ecological organisation that espouses far-right Malthusian doctrines whilst ingratiating itself with anarchist direct actionists involved in environmental resistance.

Three Perceptions International infiltrators have so far been identified. They are Marc Mead, Seymour Day 'Bud' Vestermark and Mary Lou Sapone. It was Mead who gave Trutt $1,200 to purchase the bomb; he also drove her to USCC and was present at her arrest. In fact Mead had rehearsed the whole stake-out and arrest scenario with Norwalk (Conneticut) police several hours earlier.

Vestermark has often been seen at animal rights demonstrations and conferences in Conneticut and Washington DC. But he is no ordinary operative: in 1978 he wrote a book for the security business called Controlling Crime In School: A Complete Security Handbook For Administrators. Before that he held a position in the White House as part of a task force 'charged with developing policies to deal with the aftermath of political assassinations and collective violence'. He is currently the senior editor of *Animal Rights Reporter*, a magazine published on behalf of the animal exploitation industries about the activities of animal rights activists. Surprise, surprise, the magazine is published by a company called Perceptions Press, which is directly connected to Perceptions International in that *Animal Rights Reporter* is mailed by the latter organisation and both are headed by the same director, Jan Reber. Reber is the former head of Security Perception Unlimited, whose staff included a former assistant director of the FBI and a former military intelligence officer. Reber's former company specialised in selling information on 'international terrorist problems' to the business world. As for Mary Lou Sapone, she is on the staff roll of Perceptions International and receives a salary from them of $50,000. After Trutt's arrest Sapone gave the FBI tapes of conversations between herself and Trutt. Sapone is now known to have infiltrated several animal rights groups, including Animal's Agenda (whose magazine is sent to *Black Flag* and other anarchist groups unsolicited), Friends of Animals, and Animal Rights Alliance (of which she was president for a time). Sapone succeeded in getting hold of mailing lists, including that of the Animal Liberation Front Support Group, of Canada, which has direct links with the ALF in Britain.

More importantly Sapone used her links with the ALF to attend the Anarchist Survival Gathering last year in Toronto, which was attended by anarchist and other groups from all over North America and elsewhere (a representative from *Black Flag* was also present). The Anarchist Gathering was subsequently reported on in Perceptions International *Animal Rights Reporter*. Sapone is on the mailing lists of several anarchist publications in North America, including *Reality Now*, the paper co-produced by the Toronto Black Cross, and *Ecomedia Bulletin* (which has ended her subscription). She also affiliated to the new organisation Mayday!, which has all the trappings of being phoney, although it is early days to draw any firm conclusions. Other organisations she has infiltrated include Earth First! and the War Resisters League. For the record Sapone's last known address is Pine Mount Road, Ridgefield, Conneticut.

Fran Trutt

We should also point out that the *Animal Rights Reporter* by no means limits its investigations to animal activist organisations but also comments on the anarchist scene not just in North America but internationally. A recent Reporter article mused on the possible connections between the British ALF and the Angry Brigade (sic). Never mind the fact that the Angry Brigade ceased its activities at least 10 years prior to the ALF starting up (with the exception of the odd phoney group using the Angry Brigade moniker), this nonsense is aimed at a home audience that is keen to tie in anarchist groups with other, blatantly anti-anarchist, groups in preparation for further frame-ups.

A defence fund has been set up for Fran Trutt.

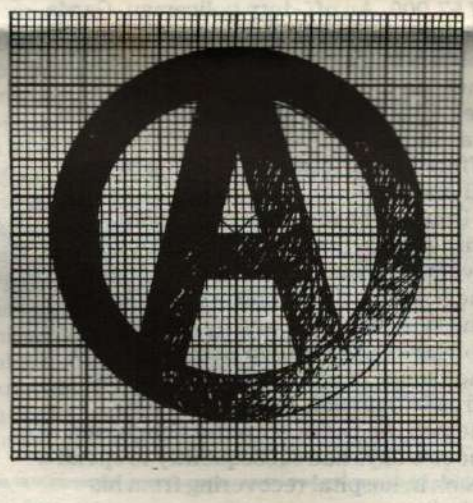
Donations should be sent to:
Fran Trutt Defence Fund,
266-B Main Street,
Suite 120,
Munroe, CT 06468 USA.

Letters for Fran can be sent to Ecomedia Bulletin, Toronto.

(The above article was based on information supplied by Ecomedia, Toronto.)

COMMENT: In Britain security firms, working sometimes for MI5 and sometimes for private industry, employ former state security agents, freelancers and often former convicted criminals. In a recent TV programme David Coughlan, ex-SAS, provided details of how he is engaged in a number of security operations involving surveillance, which have included spying on anti-nuclear protestors involved in the Sizewell B protest. Coughlan was contracted by Zeus Security, an organisation that should by now be well known to *Black Flag* readers. It was he who then sub-contracted work to Barry Peachman (who later committed suicide in the aftermath of the Hilda Murrell murder) and Victor Norris (a known nazi and convicted sex molestor) to infiltrate the protestors. They, in turn, employed 'suitable people' to mix in with the protestors to bug their conversations. The programme made no reference to the Murrell murder, but did briefly mention Lord Chalfont, exclusively revealed in *Black Flag* as a director of Zeus and its follow-on companies.

As regards animal libbers, it is not that they particularly lend themselves to this infiltration, but illegal actions naturally attract moles. Freelance vermin of this nature feed upon industrial activity and upon the fringes of the anarchist movement; 'security' agents upon whatever volcano happens to be erupting.



PRISONER'S ORGANISER FRAMED ON ASSAULT CHARGE

INDUSTRIAL WORKERS of the World (IWW) prisoners organiser, John Perotti, has been indicted on an assault charge. The IWW believes he has been framed because of his pro-union work.

Perotti—incarcerated in Ohio State Penitentiary—is accused of stabbing a fellow prisoner in the stomach, yet no guards or prisoners saw him do it and Perotti states that he was locked in his cell when the stabbing incident occurred. Despite there having been numerous similar incidents involving stabbings by other prisoners the indictment against Perotti is the first for some years in the penitentiary. Nor is the prisoner who was stabbed actively persuing the prosecution of Perotti—this being done by the County Prosecutor, who regards Perotti as a troublemaker.

A trial has been scheduled for June 19 and in the meantime an IWW attorney is seeking dismissal of the case. If the trial proceeds the IWW attorney hopes to take the opportunity to bring to the attention of the court the three year battle by Ohio prisoners to unionise. As has been graphically shown with the 'ghosting' of prisoner's council organiser, John Bowden, of HMP Long Lartin, England (now in HMP Winson Green—see last issue), attempts by prisoners to collectively organise to improve control over their own lives can result in drastic action by the prison authorities. Perotti and Bowden are fighting the same fight, from different prisons separated by thousands of miles but united by conviction.

(More information about the latest on John Perotti can be obtained from
IWW General Defense Committee,
Local 1,
DE Slaton, secretary,
PO Box 26381,
Trotwood, Ohio 45426, USA.)

N.B. Plymouth Black Cross are organising a fund-raising event on behalf of John Perotti. Full details from
Plymouth ABC,
PO Box 105,
Plymouth, Devon.

AVI NAFTEL

Avi has been moved to a different prison in Tucson and has been reclassified as a medium security inmate. His address is as follows:

Avi Naftel, 45287,
ASPC-T-CIMARRON,
10,000 South Wilmot,
Tucson, AZ 85777-0005, USA.

AUTONOMY IN our interpretation is not only the final social aim, but also the free, responsible, morally guided behaviour of self-conscious people.

The aim is a society without rulers, without hierarchy, without authoritarianism; a society based on autonomy, self-governing communities functioning in a decentralised federation. Mutual aid, non-violence, tolerance and rejection of hierarchy should be the principal aims of the self-organising society. All economic entities (factories, companies, etc) should be the common property of those working there, and all these should be run according to the principles of workers' self-governing. The economy should be submitted to humanitarian and ecological goals.

Direct democracy should work for all policy. The groups of people or communities should form their councils working on the principles of direct democracy and imperative mandate, that is the members should only represent the decisions made by the voters.

No more oppression, no more exploitation!

No more discrimination for political, national, racist, religious, sexual or any other reasons!

No more patriarchial men's rule! All women, children and elderly people should enjoy total emancipation.

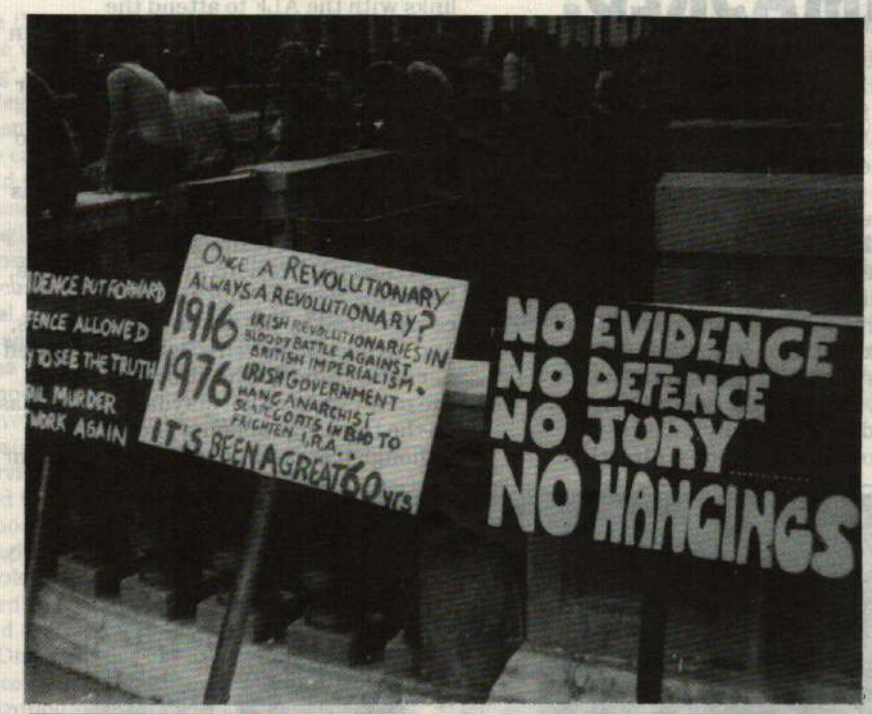
Autonomia is an independent Hungarian political group without any leadership, which will not work either as an association or as a political organisation (ie a party, etc). The group will not join the struggle for political power, but will support the other independent grassroot communities, movements and groups, and will help them become active in the current political situation. The group will not have its representatives but will be active politically in a direct way by spreading its ideas and creating new alternative ways of life. Though the final aim is the society without parties and state, in the current political situation in Hungary we support all independent initiatives which try to break down the power of this totalitarian one-party system and fight for pluralism.

None of the existing models of democracy in the world are attractive enough for us; we reject all state-power systems.

AUTONOMIA
Budapest, November 1988.

WE STILL SAY, FREE THE MURRAYS!

'The prosecution have said...that a large sum of money found in a suitcase in my home was stolen money. It was not stolen. This money is part of the funds of the anarchist movement. It was donated by different individuals and groups principally for the relief of prisoners. It was to be distributed through our relief organisation, the Anarchist Black Cross. Now, I intend to claim back every penny of this money. It's not stolen money and I want it back for the Anarchist Black Cross.'
(Noel Murray—Dublin Special Criminal Court, 8th June 1976)



8 am, 8th October 1975: 'Ann Finlay' was laughing as she pushed open the front door of her house in the Dublin suburb of Rahney. She walked through to the kitchen. A man she couldn't see grabbed her around the neck from behind. 'John Finlay', her husband, was still standing in the hallway with the young Alsatian puppy they had just taken for a walk. A man with a machine gun jumped at him roaring, 'Murray, you are dead!' Two more men grabbed hold of him, threatening to shoot the dog, and reaching into 'Finlay's' pocket book took out a .455 calibre pistol. Armed men were appearing from all over the house. Twenty armed Gardai and detectives, under the direction of Detective Inspector Myles Hawkshaw of the Special Detective Unit, had just arrested the Anarchists Noel and Marie Murray. Nine months later, on 9th June 1976, after a farcical trial in Dublin's no-jury Special Criminal Court, the Murrays were sentenced to death by hanging.

On 11th September 1975, the Killester branch of the Bank of Ireland was robbed of £7,000. An off-duty policeman, Garda Michael Reynolds, gave chase to the robbers in his own car, then pursued them on foot through St Anne's Park. Reynolds tackled one of the raiders and was shot dead. A reward of £20,000 was offered for information leading to the killers.

Despite the fact that there were no witnesses to the shooting, the Dublin Evening Herald felt competent to print the headline, 'Anarchists shoot Garda'. The story was followed by over 200 police raids om known anarchists, and the families and friends of comrades already in prison. One person who 'helped the police with their enquiries' for two days had subsequently to spend a week in hospital recovering from his injuries.

Arrested separately, at the same time as the Murrays, was a prominent Prisoners' Rights activist, Ronan Stenson. Two days before Stenson's arrest, his photograph had been published in the Irish Times, showing him handing a Prisoners Rights Organisatiion leaflet to Prime Minister Cosgrave. He was beaten for thirty hours with a hammer and a knotted rope, before making a 'confession' which he later retracted. Unable to stand trial with the Murrays because he had been so badly tortured by the 'Heavy Gang'* at the time of his arrest, Stenson spent more than nine months in a prison hospital. With no witnesses, no evidence, and no murder weapon (the gun found on Noel was a different calibre to the one that killed Reynolds), the only evidence in the case was an unsigned 'confession' by Marie, invented by Detective Inspector Ryan and Detective Finn.

A massive international solidarity campaign forced the quashing of Noel's death sentence in December 1976, and the ordering of a re-trial for Marie in April 1977. Both received 'life' instead. Ronan Stenson was freed in January 1977 as a result of the revelations of police torture which the defence campaign had brought into the open.

The Murray Defence Campaign was initiated, though hardly 'led', by the London *Black Flag* group (prompting Conor Brady in the *Irish Times*, 10th December 1976, to speculate darkly on the connections between Noel and the Black Cross). In London regular pickets were mounted at the Irish Embassy and the Allied Irish Bank in Kilburn. Aer Lingus in Regent Street was occupied and shut down on 10th November 1976. Amnesty International was occupied the same month after it refused to take up the Murrays' case. Similar actions erupted all across England, Scotland and Ireland as local Murray Defence groups mushroomed.

Official Sinn Fein (the so called 'Workers Party') responded to the call for solidarity with embarrassed denials that the Murrays had ever been members of their organisation before embracing Anarchism (a lie, Noel and Marie were both former 'stickies'). A paranoiac Marxist grouplet 'Revolutionary Struggle' tried to hi-jack the campaign in Ireland once the widespread support for the Murrays became evident. They were given the bum's rush. But the Irish Revolutionary Socialist Party, the People's Democracy, Provisional Sinn Fein, Workers Revolutionary Party and even the Socialist Workers Party (after much prodding) all gave varying degrees of support. Republican prisoners in Crumlin Road remand prison (Belfast) gave their support, prisoners in Gartree top security prison in England sent the campaign 62 of their meagre 'earnings'. Support came too from all over the world: France, Germany, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Japan, Australia, USA, Canada, Spain... Thirteen comrades in Madrid were arrested on 2nd November 1976 during a demonstration called by the CNT outside the Irish Embassy. And dewspite concerted press hostility, intellectuals like Jean-Paul Satre, Hugh McDiarmid, Heinrich Boll, Kathleen Raine and Arthur Koestler were amongst those who signed letters and petitions calling for Noel and Marie to be reprieved.

Many people who would probably prefer to remain anonymous gave of their very best. But two people, sadly not here today, deserve a special word of acknowledgement. Miguel Garcia, who died in December 1981 after a lifetime of struggle in the Anarchist cause, was the man chiefly responsible for the fantastic impact with which the international outcry exploded around the ears of the Dublin government. Cosgrave and his cronies had thought the Anarchists were a soft target. Miguel proved them wrong. Miriam Daly of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, gave her all to the campaign as Secretary of the Dublin Murray Defence Committee. No Anarchist herself, she did great work on behalf of our comrades. On 26 June 1980, Ulster Defence Association assassins broke into her home, tied Miriam up and shot her to death.

The Murray Defence Campaign was a success, in that it proved that Noel and Marie were not isolated; and that it is possible for international solidarity to defend those singled out for attack by the state. But fourteen years in prison is a bittersweet victory. On 20 May 1976 the trial judge, Justice P ringle, told Noel and Marie, 'I am going to have you removed'. Marie told him, 'The day will come when the people of Ireland will remove you and your like.'

This article was commissioned for a special occasion; one that should be dear to all who identify with revolutionary Anarchism: twenty years of *Black Flag*.

'The Flag' began as the Bulletin of the Anarchist Black Cross. It was never intended to become, as it has since, the mainstay of the Anarchist press in Britain, simply a springboard to revolutionary action. Its strength was in realising that it is not the job of revolutionaries to idealise aims, but to reject oppression. By bringing practical solidarity to class war prisoners, the Black Cross helped revitalise an Anarchism grown moribund (personified in this country by Freedom). Its influence over the last twenty years is impossible to quantify, but is surely immense.

Amongst the self-congratulatory nostalgia that inevitably attends an anniversary such as this, let us not lose sight of the fact that we still have a long way to go before we can dance on the smoking ruins of capitalism. The Murrays are still in prison today. Now, as loudly as in 1976, we should demand: **FREE THE MURRAYS!**

Phil Ruff.

* Led by Detective Inspector Ned 'the Buffalo'' Ryan (of the Central Detective Unit), the 'unofficial' torture squad known as the 'Heavy Gang' was notorious in the late 1970's for its systematic battering of prisoners under interrogation. Besides the assaults on Noel Murray and Ronan Stenson, Ryan and his confederates were implicated, also in 1975, in torturing a suspect into 'revealing' the whereabout of the kidnappers (Marion Coyle and Eddie Gallagher) of Dutch industrialist Tiede Herrema, and the framing of Nicky Kelly, after a mail train robbery attributed to the IRSP. Ryan subsequently distinguished himself by being convicted for beating senseless a 'drunk driver'.

NOEL MURRAY ADDS: '*...I thought the articles on MI5 and Ireland were very good and long overdue. I feel that most people in Britain have little or no knowledge or understanding of the situation in Ireland or of the reasons for the situation. I think an article (or series of articles) on the Irish situation and the underlying causes would be very appropriate. As you know the conflict in the north is not a nationalist or religious one as some people attempt to portray it. Whatever people feel about what's happening over here it's important to realise two things: firstly, that there can be no real political or social progress in any part of this country until there's some kind of solution to the conflict in the North and secondly, that the methods being used by 'Intelligence' and the 'Security Forces' in Ireland will be used (as in the Hilda Murrell case) to stifle all forms of anti-government dissent in Britain and to crush industrial and social struggles. You saw something of this in the Miners and Wapping disputes and* ***Black Flag*** *gave great coverage of the events.*

I've been reading about John Perotti's efforts to start a section of the IWW (see separate news item—Eds). He has great courage to try that in his position. I hope he's successful. The Long Lartin situation (see last issue—Eds) seems very interesting...

There's no sign of a release date for us yet and we wont be given any form of temporary release or parole until we get a date. Unfortunately there is no parole or Review board here in the South so a decision on a release date depends entirely on the attitude of the Minister of Justice. The conjugal rights case can't go ahead in the Supreme Court until the judge who handled the case in the High Court returns the agreed notes of that case to the Supreme Court. In May it will have been five years since that court case, so effectively the judge is preventing us from going to the Supreme Court by ignoring us...

NOEL MURRAY.

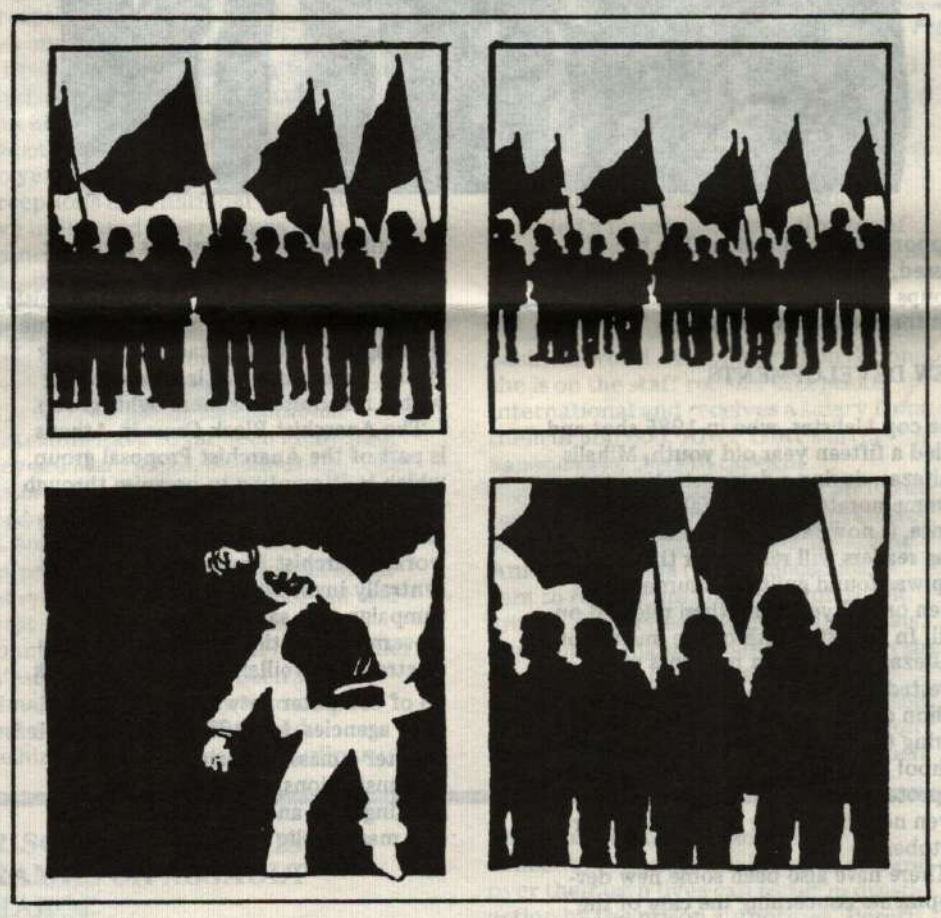
(The above are extracts from a letter to a member of the *Black Flag* collective). COMMENT: The judge in the conjugal rights case has deliberately sabotaged the proceedings and the release date is a matter purely at the whim of a government minister. Clearly the authorities in Ireland hope that the Murrays will be forgotten—but we will not forget.

the cnt today

The following are extracts, based on an interview with the CNT-AIT, the anarchist-syndicalist union in Spain, by the FAU, the anarcho-syndicalist organisation in West Germany. Also examined is the difference between the way the state-sponsored unions organise and the way the CNT organises.

From the time of Franco union structures have hardly altered and union representatives are selected without reference to the workers. The CNT has consistently opposed these state-organised union elections. It's not surprising, therefore, that only 10% of workers in Spain are members of the union blocks that collaborate with this system. These unions—who ironically refer to themselves as 'majority unions'—base their 'majority' on the number of registered votes at union elections, not on members or the actual presence of the union in the workplace. It should also be noted that less than 50% of workers actually participate or vote in the workplace elections.

The CNT, in contrast, advocates 'Syndicate Sections', agreed at workplace plenaries. Under the 'Syndicate Sections' workers choose recallable delegates who are given strict mandates. The CNT has spent ten years fighting the state union structure by advocating and practising direct action as a way of imposing change, rather than referring to legal process.



FAU: Are the workplace assemblies for CNT members only?

CNT: They are open to all workers but not union functionaries.

FAU: Are there any advantages to the Syndicate Sections being acknowledged legally?

CNT: Under the present system legal acknowledgement is the only way to get work contracts. We should emphasise that in contrast to the state-sponsored unions, the CNT Syndicate Sections are independent and controlled directly by their membership. CNT workplace meetings are open to all. When agreements have to be worked out between bosses and workers, the CNT calls an assembly to gauge the concensus. Only then will demands be drawn up. In contrast, the UGT and CCOO (the 'Majority' unions) decide on their demands first with their union leaderships before presenting them to the bosses. The CNT, however, always strictly adheres to the mandates of the assemblies.

FAU: Are there other Syndicate Sections beside the CNT?

CNT: In theory yes, in practise no. The other union blocks however are now trying to follow our example because they are worried about falling membership.

FAU: How were the Syndicate Sections acheived?

CNT: We started to set up the Syndicate Sections in 1976 and after much struggle and illegality succeeded in establishing Syndicate Sections in opposition to the state-sponsored structure.

FAU: Where does the CNT stand on the question of legallity?

CNT: As far as the CNT is concerned, we are neither illegal or legal but act as we have always done. We gain our strength from workplace struggles, as in Puerto Real, and not by reference to laws. The decisive point of issue for us is direct action.

With reference to the recent General Strike on the 14th December, this came about due to the deteriorating position of workers constrained by the Social Pact. The situation worsened with the introduction of the Youth Employment Plan (PEJ) which is designed to split the working class.

FAU: Does the Plan mean compulsory work for young people?

CNT: Work should never be compulsory. For the last three years only one in every eight workers in Spain has a permanent job. Workers fear casualisation because without work contracts their employment rights and conditions are negligible. Under the Plan young people aged 18-26 receive only minimum wages and employers are no longer compelled to contribute to health insurance, etc. The Plan only allows for jobs to last a maximum of 16 months. All in all, the PEJ provides an opportunity for employers to dismiss existing workers and take on the young under the new conditions. The scheme therefore divides the workers.

To put all this in perspective, it's important to recognize that between 1986-87 company profits generally rose over 30%; furthermore employers steadily attacked job conditions through 'flexibilisation' and consistently contravened existing agreements.

To return to the PEJ, it is ironic that it is also an attack on the 'majority unions', the UGT and CCOO (who have both collaborated with the Social Pact), in that the Plan could effectively divide their memberships.

FAU: How did the Socialist government respond to the General Strike, in which the CNT also took part?

CNT: The government was shocked at the massive response. The immediate after-effect was a heightening of tension between the PSOE and the UGT.

In Spain the classical political Right since Franco has been overtaken by the new, and far more dangerous, Right, namely the Socialist Worker's Party (PSOE). This is no exaggeration. Some UGT functionaries, who didn't want to strike against the Socialist government, left their union. Prior to the General Strike the CNT sought advice from a national plenum of regional federations, the highest decision-making body between congresses. The CNT decided that the Strike was only to be symbolic in that it would have negligible effect on the general economic situation. Change can only come about through constant daily struggle in the factories throughout the country. The CNT slogan therefore is: 'The struggle continues!' A one day strike by itself, changes nothing. At the same time, it was also clear to us that we must give full support to the Strike. We therefore organised our own propaganda and through our workplace assemblies presented our own demands.

On December 14th the whole of Spain was paralysed. Nothing moved, no trains, no planes, nobody worked. The previous evening at midnight workers interrupted the RTVE (state television company) transmission at the precise point that an announcement was being made that the UGT and CCOO were happy for a minimum TV service to take place the next day. Emergency cover was allowed for in the hospitals and for energy supplies—but no more. However, the UGT and CCOO made a deal with the employers that some transport services would go ahead. When it came to the day, the workers overrode this deal and brought the transport services to a standstill.

FAU: In retrospect was the experience of the Strike seen to be useful?

CNT: The workers who took part in the Strike did so with full force. Afterwards, workers in some regions and areas continued the strike action. There was a great atmosphere on December 14th but the mood for revolution was limited because the Strike was limited to one day. The UGT and CCOO called on the workers to be peaceful—how can a confrontation between strikers and police be 'peaceful'? After the Strike the government considered compromises but no changes were made to the PEJ. However, the minimum wage was increased by 6%, which was still far less than the 9.75% and 13% demanded by the UGT and CCOO.

FAU: What is the situation with the youth movement?

CNT: Spanish youth are hardly organised and there is no youth movement to speak of. Ironically, though, the PEJ has led to more young activists.

FAU: In the aftermath of the Strike, do you see the UGT and the CCOO combining?

CNT: Fortunately, the two union blocks are still divided, although they will continue to work together. But since the Strike, their relationship has changed.

FAU: If the union blocks cannot work under the terms of the Social Pact, will they lose their state funding and become bankrupt?

CNT: The Social Pact continues but the CNT have launched a major campaign against it. We will be doing this in all the workplaces through strikes and other forms of direct action.

FAU: Are disillusioned members of the UGT now joining the CNT?

CNT: UGT and CCOO members are mainly concerned with piecemeal reforms and vertical unionism, whereas CNT menbers look for longer term change. There are many workers, however, who are dissillusioned and dissapointed by the politics of the UGT and CCOO and they are now looking to us. Previously unorganised youth have now become more militant—they too look to us.

The CNT is an anarcho-syndicalist union whose goal is for total change. The CNT is an anarcho-syndicalist organisation of workers and not an organisation of anarcho-syndicalist workers. This is an important difference.

FAU: What influence did CNT propaganda have on the General Strike and on workers of other unions?

CNT: Our influence has always been prominent. We organised our own demonstrations and made our objectives clear. In Salamanca, for example, every morning and every evening there have been CNT demonstrations involving upwards of 2000 workers.

FAU; Did the police attack these CNT demonstrations?

CNT: Altogether there were 137 arrests during the General Strike of which around 40 involved members of the CNT. The police attacked CNT demonstrations in Barcelona, Sarragosa, Caceres and La Coruna. In Sarragosa the whole picket line outside the Cortes Ingles store was arrested—CCOO members were freed, but CNT comrades were kept in custody.

FAU: What are the attitudes of people in Spain regarding the European Community (EC) and what are the policies of the UGT and CCOO on this question?

CNT: Opposition to the EC is mainly to do with effects on rising prices of essential goods, while luxury items for the rich have correspondingly become cheaper. The EC demands that Spain becomes a major agricultural producer—such work usually involves manual labour and greater exploitation. The EC agricultural policy, however, is not serving our interests and landless peasant workers as well as small farmers are being excluded from any benefits. The big landowners and property owners and aristocrats own land in Spain the equivalent of the area of Belgium.

We expect the situation to get worse. There will be more exploitation. The UGT seems blind to what is happening and are even in agreement with EC policy. The same for the CCOO, despite questions raised within the workers commissions.

FAU: For the future, will the CNT be addressing these problems further?

CNT: Certainly. At the end of this year, the next national CNT congress has the EC as it's main topic. Also, at the last IWA congress it was decided that more attention needs to be given to this question. We will be deciding on the best means of resisting the EC.

POSTSCRIPT

The discussions between the Spanish government and the UGT and CCOO, in the aftermath of the General Strike, have broken down. The government clearly wants the union blocks to be the arbitrators of 'social peace' and guarantee the safe passing of PSOE proposals through Parliament. However, Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalaz insists on the autonomy of government from the union blocks and looks for support for his policies from the parties of the Right, in particular Partido Popular (which seeks no-strike laws). Ultimately the policies the PSOE and the Right are to ban unions.

LEST WE FORGET

ELEVEN YEARS ago Laureano Cerrada Santos was murdered as he came out of a pub in the Paris working-class district of Belleville. He was 74 years old, and unarmed. He had been marked out by Franco's police, working with the French police, and was killed by Ramon Benicho Sanudo, alias Ramon Leriles, who fled to Canada. Leriles is believed to be still there, maybe under another name, possibly earning a living by his other trade of espionage.

Cerrada was a founder of the railway union of the genuine CNT, who after the civil war, like many other anarcho-syndicalists, continued the fight he had put up previous to and during hostilities. In France during the World War he proved a skilled forger, printing hundreds of official carnets for use in Spain (helping many to resume their lives) and in occupied France itself (working on the general principle that the rich paid for the whole operation and the poor and the resisters got it free), he forged, as well as funds for the Resistance, identity and ration cards for Jews, altering national marks, and Resistance fighters.

Probably some found their way to Canadian escapees (as Allied service personnel were also helped), but needless to say no thanks were given by the Allies afterwards—not even to the extent of the Canadian government troubling to find his killer.

ANARCHY IN GREECE

THE GROWTH of revolutionary Anarchism was the subject of a report given to Black Flag by an Anarchist Black Cross contact who recently visited London while on his way to attend the Black Cross conference in Bradford last month. The following is a summary of that report.

Beginning with Black Cross activity, recent campaigns included support for two militants, Roberto Gemignani and Maurizio Follini. The former is an Italian anarchist who was arrested in 1987 in Paris but, after pressure and solidarity work from anarchists in France and comrades involved with the ABC in Greece, was released without extradition. The latter was involved in armed struggle in the early '70's in Italy but was arrested in Greece pending extradition. Again, due to support work from the ABC in Greece and other anarchists extradition was dropped and he was released..

Ongoing ABC campaigns include support work for Kostas Grivas, who was arrested in September 1988 and accused of throwing a molotov at a bank in Exarchia Square in Athens. Although damage was minor, he has been specifically charged with arson, endangering life and property, creating explosions, etc and could face 20 years in prison. Last December he was freed on bail but a recent decision by the Council of Judges has meant that he may be re-arrested. Grivas is now appealing against this decision and the ABC is helping in his defence.

Another case the ABC is assisting in is that of Sotiris Deliyannis, who was arrested in 1987 and accused of attacking a cop during the November 17 demonstration in 1986. He is accused of being one of those who disarmed four cops and of retaining their weapons. The cops were plain clothed and were considered at the time to be provocateurs. Deliyannis has since been sentenced to 11 years imprisonment.

The Black Cross is also involved in organising generally against the Justice system and in assisting the prisoners movement. The suicide rate in prisons, especially in Youth Custody prisons, is one of the highest in Europe. Health care is minimal and there are numerous cases of prisoners dying through lack of care. One prisoner, whose situation the Black Cross has helped to highlight, is still suffering from wounds he received when he was arrested in 1973. He is a lifer and under the law of the old Junta life means life. That law no longer applies but prisoners who were arrested at the time when it did are still required to stay imprisoned until they die.

The situation over prison conditions generally was investigated by a Thessalonica prosecutor who reported that Greek prisons are rife with corruption, with gaolers at the centre of the prison heroin trade. Her report placed the blame directly on the Director of Prisons and on the Minister of Justice. As a result she was herself prosecuted for 'insulting' these officials and 'making false allegations'. Another prosector was then appointed to make a report, but he came to the same conclusions - and he too was prosecuted! In a recent scandal a former prisoner, Panayotis Gaglis, who was active in the prisoners movement and who had made direct accusations against the Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice, was found dead, tortured and axed to death. The Secretary General, George Assimalopoulos, is suspected by many to have given the orders for his murder. Assimalopoulos is one of the longest serving officials of the Government and is a former senior military officer whose politics is of the extreme right. Gaglis, before he died, also named gaolers and others in the Prisons Department who are involved in drugs dealing and theft.

One case that has been given assistance by the ABC is that of Katerina Iatropoulou, who is an anarchist and a lawyer. Katerina has been active in the prisoners movement for many years, she fought against the Junta, and in recent years has helped publish a magazine for prisoners. She has since been accused of helping two prisoners, Yannis Petropolos and Haris Teberekidis, of escaping and supplying them with arms. The two prisoners were both lifers; the former was accused of killing his mother's lover who had been beating her up, and the latter had been sentenced on charges relating to armed robbery and the killing of a cop. Iatropoulou is now out on bail awaiting trial.

ACTIONS AGAINST DRUGS

A scandal broke recently when over 100 cops were named in Parliament as being involved in drugs trafficking. The anarchists in Greece, however, having been taking action of their own against the drugs dealers.

In Athens anarchists raided a drugs centre, where heroin was sold and in Piraeus members of Revolutionary Peoples Struggle (ELA) bombed a police station last September as it had been identified as a source for the licensing of bars that are known centres of drugs trafficking.

Last August, too, members of the November 17 group, raided a police station in Vyronas, a suburb of Athens, and took all the guns from the police before locking them up in their own cells. The police then had to be released by the Emergency police, known as the Direct Action Police.

ACTIONS AGAINST 'JUSTICE'

In recent months there have been several armed actions against representatives of the so-called Justice system.

In January members of the November 17 group shot a state prosecutor, who later died due to poor medical treatment. A few days later members of the same group shot another state prosecutor and a week after that a third state prosecutor was killed by members of the First of May group. Last month the First of May group bombed the home of a leading judge. As a result of all this activity a special anti-terrorist organisation has been formed. Just as serious, the Union of Prosecutors & Judges has presented a bill to Parliament outlawing any publication that publishes propaganda in support of armed action. The bill, if passed, will make it illegal for political groups to publish any articles of criticism that propose violence.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The cop Melistas, who in 1985 shot and killed a fifteen year old youth, Mihalis Kaltezas, during a demonstration to commemorate the downfall of the Junta, is now facing a re-trial. Black Flag readers will remember that the cop was found guilty of murder but given only 2 years and then released on bail. In the aftermath of the murder of Kaltezas thirty seven militants were arrested and accused of causing over one billion drachmas worth of damage during the occupation of the Chemistry School building in the centre of Athens in protest at the killing. The thirty seven now have their trial date set for October 25

There have also been some new developments concerning the case of the Union of Anarchist members who, in October 1987, were involved in a street confrontation with police resulting in the gunning down of one U of A member. Mihalis Prekas was killed by the cops and a new investigation into his killing has now begun. Two of those arrested, Marinos and Smyrneos, both of the U of A, were sent to trial last month, but police witnesses refused to appear and the trial has now been postponed. In 1987 two other militants connected with the incident were arrested. Mikis Boukouvalas and Vaghelio Voyatzi are accused of forming an armed group, a section of ELA, which is linked to the group Anti-State Struggle. Last September both were tried and Boukouvalas was found not guilty while Voyatzi was given six months on lesser charges.

Since the trials the Union of Anarchists in Athens has more or less dissolved due to disagreements over tactics. Another group, Anarchist Coil, is now working with a reformist prisoners rights group.

The Anarchist Black Cross in Athens is part of the Anarchist Proposal group, which is attempting to organise through ateneos (locals) and collectives. It's emphasis is on international solidarity work. Anarchist Proposal was also centrally involved in the successful campaign that saw the defeat of the Government initiative to bring in mass electronic surveillance through the link up of computer networks of various state agencies. In 1987 the bill was defeated after a mass campaign involving demonstrations, propaganda, local meetings, etc and the announcement of a mass public boycott.

N.B. Sotiris Deliyannis and Kostas Grivas can be contacted c/o Dikastiki Fylaki Larissas, Larissa, Greece.

ANTI-APARTHEID ACTIVIST FREED!

IN JANUARY the alleged RARA (the Netherlands-based Radical Anti-Racist Action) activist, Rene Roemersma, was released after an appeal against a five year sentence. Rene was one of five arrested in the Spring of 1988 after a massive police raid on several houses in Amsterdam. RARA had claimed responsibility for a series of arson attacks on the VHS chain of retail stores, whose parent company had extensive branches in South Africa as well as major investments in that country. Millions of guilders worth of damage was caused and in the end the company was forced to pull out of South Africa in order to retain insurance. The police authorities also tried to link RARA with a series of attacks from 1984 onwards on a number of targets that included the Morrocan consulate and a printers, Elba, that had the contract for a new machine-readable passport.

But the police campaign in the aftermath of the raids proved unsuccessful: no evidence was produced and all those questioned refused to make statements or names. Within a week seven of the eight arrested were released, leaving Rene to face charges.

While all this was going on, and during Rene's trial, the attacks on South African related targets continued. Rene was also supported with numerous demonstrations outside his prison, culminating in a siege of the prison on New Years eve by hundreds of his comrades.

Rene, although released, still had to face trial for the attacks on Elba. Even if found guilty (which is unlikely) he will have served his sentence already on the previous counts.

LEONARD PELTIER LODGES APPEAL

LEONARD PELTIER, a N American Indian prisoner, has lodged an appeal in Canada on the basis that his extradition to the USA in 1976 was based on fraudulent evidence presented by the FBI. Peltier was charged with the murder of two FBI agents who had started a shoot-out—when they killed an Indian—at the Pine Ridge reservation in the USA. Two others who faced the same charge as Peltier were let free on the basis of self-defence, while Peltier himself escaped to Canada.

Peltier's contention is that the FBI presented fabricated evidence to the Canadian courts in order to secure his extradition. After his trial Peltier succeeded in proving that the main evidence used against him was fraudulent—yet a retrial was disallowed. Peltier is now putting all his faith in his appeal against the original extradition. The Canadian authorities, however, are unenthusiastic, to say the least, about the case and are unlikely to move unless pressure on them is stepped up.

Peltier is a long time militant of the American Indian Movement and it was no coincidence that the FBI shoot-out occurred on the day that a Government stooge at Pine Gap was signing away huge tracts of land to resource companies for exploitation.

The Anarchist Black Cross group in Toronto is calling on all other ABC groups to take action in support of Peltier. On April 17, in London there was a picket of Canada House by the Black Cross. In the USA and in Canada there were similar pickets and it is hoped that support actions for Peltier will spread.

Source: Toronto Black Cross

THE VULTURES DESCEND

AS THE long-suffering people of the Soviet Union and other countries in the Eastern Bloc begin to slowly crawl from under the corpse of totalitarianism, the vultures of the equally dogmatic hard-right are already descending to pick on the poisoned carcass and leave their own deadweight to stifle the liberty that is so desperately sought.

A whole industry of right-wing glasnost-watchers and ideologues is spewing from the bellies of these carrion, who are more known for their own versions of the totalitarian creed than for promoting freedom from repression. Among the first to descend are organisations with innocuous names such as the European Freedom Foundation, the Samizdat Press Agency, and Young Europeans for World Freedom, or the paper *Soviet Analyst*. They are all bogus, trying to cash in on the relatively greater freedom in the Eastern Bloc, but also hoping to spread false stories, promote nationalism, and ultimately a right-wing revolution. A number of documents pertaining to these organisations have been received by *Black Flag*.

Young Europeans for World Freedom (YEWF) we have referred to in a previous issue—they are the, London-based, European section of the youth wing of the World Anti-Communist Wing. They also refer to Western Goals UK as YEWF's 'British chapter'. Their newsletter, *Young European*, supports the Baltic states' mission for greater independence as well as the revolts in Armenia and elsewhere. YEWF attempts to appear respectable and boasts that it's Finnish chapter, the Finland Youth Freedom Council, is 'working closely with a human rights association called the Helsinki Group of Finland', founded in 1985 to monitor the 1875 Helsinki accords. (On the other side of the coin YEWF is backing 'human rights' through its close support of the neo-fascist Arena group in El Salvador: *Young European* states that Arena's Major D'Aubisson will deal with the communists 'properly'.) As previously stated YEWF is dominated by a number of persons who were involved in the banned Federation of Conservative Students. We also learn that YEWF's steering committee includes Andreas Becker (German Young Conservatives—the KJD), Ivars Svilis (Latvian Youth Organisation), Taras Kuzio (Ukrainian Graduates and Professionals Associations), Tadeusz Kadenacy (Niepodleglosc), Michael McCrone (Chair of Young Monday Club), Mark Haley (Chair Western Goals UK), and Perrti Torni (Chair of World Youth Freedom League—the youth wing of WACL). Contrary to the impression given, none of these people live in the Eastern Bloc.

Then we come to the European Freedom Foundation. This also is London based (address c/o 22 Ladbroke Square, London W11) and has a co-ordinating committee that includes a number of exiles from the Baltic states—a few (eg Stefan Terlezki) have links with WACL. Heading the Secretariat is Sir Frederick Bennett, but the real person in charge is none other than Norris McWhirter of the Freedom Association and other far-right groups. The European Freedom Foundation shares similar aims to YEWF—namely the break-up of the Eastern Bloc via a right-inspired revolution—and also boasts an array of international contacts as their patrons. These are as follows: Spain—Senator J de Arespacochaga; Baltic States—M Bajorinas; Russia—Vladimir Bukovsky (dissident in exile) and Count Nikolai Tolstoi (far-right associate in exile); UK—Lady Bennett, Lord Chalfont (not again!), Baroness Cox, Viscount De L'Isle (former Tory MP), Lord Reay and John Wilkinson (Tory MP); Belgium—Senator General R Close; Turkey—Deputy Kamran Inan; Austria—Herr Bruno Kreisky (former chancellor of Austria); Holland—Dr Joseph Luns; Poland—Count Edward Raczynski (in exile) and 'President' K Sabbat (Polish 'government-in-exile'); Germany (West)—Deputy G Reddemann; Switzerland—Councillor P Sager; Ukraine—Mrs Slava Stetsko (a WACL affiliate in exile); Hungary—Count Teleki (in exile); and France—Deputy J Valleix. Where we know that certain people are not of the country they have been designated to represent, we have stated this, but we suspect all of the Eastern Bloc representatives to be in permanent exile. All these patrons are either of the right or far-right.

As for *Soviet Analyst* — this four page A4 newsletter is being sent to select institutions (mainly think-tanks) and individuals and costs a whacking £90 per annum for a subscription. Its editorial board includes the ubiquitous Brian Crozier, noted for his CIA and undercover propaganda work in the UK on behalf of the far-right establishment. Also on the board is Robert Conquest, who sprung to fame in the early '70's with his 'back to the three R's' article in a document on educational standards (produced by Baroness Cox and others). *Soviet Analyst* includes more of the same about Eastern Bloc revolts—from a right-wing perspective. But, again, there is little for the uninitiated that indicates the paper is a propaganda piece—instead it appears more like a cross between academia and the outpourings of a neutral news agency. A 'neutral' press agency is also what the Samizdat Press Agency pretends to be. In fact it is being set up by none other than David Hart, who was instrumental in helping to establish the scab miners union, the UDM. Hart's agency is working with the CIA to publish the views of Soviet dissidents. Hart is a close confidant of Thatcher and she regularly seeks his advice on all sorts of matters. Hart was also a close friend of the late William Casey, the former head of the CIA; his other CIA contacts include Robert Gates (present deputy director), Herb Meyer (former vice-chair of the CIA National Intelligence Committee and now an employee of Hart's in the news agency). Meyer introduced Hart to Arnaud de Borchgrave, the editor of the Moonie owned *Washington Times*. Vladimir Bukovsky also pops up again, this time as the news agency's main 'advisor'. Hart is also, of course, one of the founders of the Committee for a Free Britain.

We can expect more of these glasnost-watchers in due course. They will multiply and spawn many a nationalist grouping. They hope, no doubt, to take full advantage of the limited information coming out of the Soviet countries and put out, instead, disinformation aimed not only for right-wing consumption but also for left.

N.B. Western Goals staged an international conference in London on the theme of Eastern Europe in April. The conference was funded by the Moonies. A number of far-right organisations were represented, including YEWF, WACL and the Anti-Bolshevik Group of Nations (ABN). So far we have no further details.

ANARCHY IN THE USSR

THERE HAS been a resurgence, or maybe uncovering, of interest in anarchism. As reported in *Black Flag*, a literary review Sovetskaya Kultura (17 Dec 88)—with some five million circulation—published an article by Vasily Golovanov on *The Beliefs and Revolt of Peter Kropotkin*, sympathetic (to him personally and to some of his ideas), a shortened version of which appeared in the London business and news digest *Pravda International*. It reveals new facts about his life in Russia; and discusses his ideas (contrasting him with the 'bloodied hands' of Makhno!—but it is understood there is also going to be a fairer discussion of Makhno's life, and indeed his autobiography may be published). The article predictably works in the sentence that 'Lenin was right, of course', when he saw no reason to stop some delegates to the London conference having tea with Kropotkin, but concedes 'in remembering people like him we preserve the spiritual wealth of our nation'.

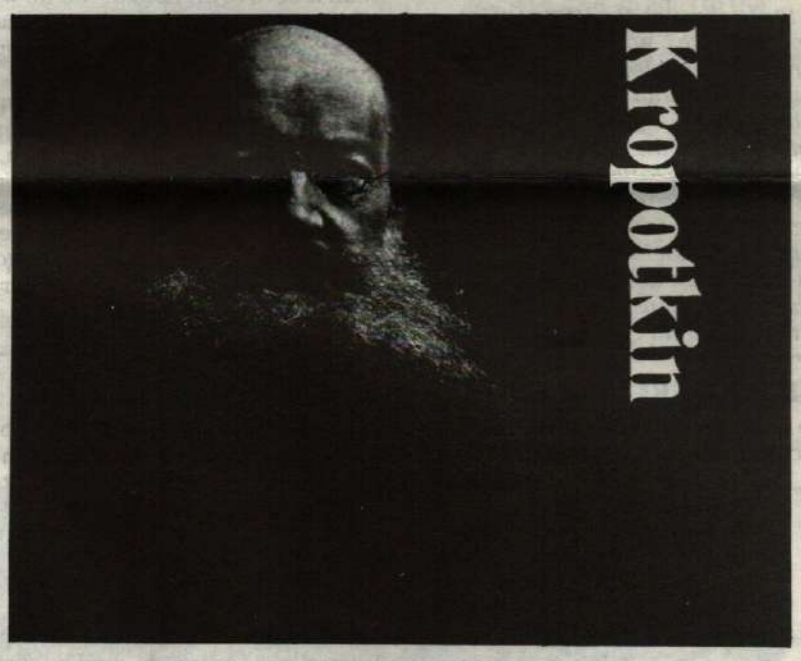
'Not only did the era of the cult wipe out living revolutionaries but the memory of those whose lives represented a challenge to what was happening', says Golovanov. There is now a demand to revive those memories: recently a Kropotkin Museum was proposed which would record the Anarchist contribution to Russian history (no doubt with the same sort of limitations as the Amsterdam Institute) rather than being a personality one only, like Russia's long-established Tolstoy Museum.

Odd that glasnost is going forward faster in Russia in some ways than in Britain: a newspaper report that not a museum but just a memorial plaque was proposed for Kropotkin in his one-time residence at the now Tory suburban borough of Bromley was greeted with horror by the local worthies (who thought English Heritage must have got mixed up with prolly Bromley-by-Bow instead). There hadn't been so much fuss since a statue to Thomas Paine was erected in his native Thetford, to the indignation of the local British Legion (Paine was a 'traitor' who fought, even if it was for democracy, with the French and Americans against 'us').

In Russia, it is a new ball game when we find Russian historians and journalists taking up past challenges to what happened; and workers putting them into practice consistent with immediate possibilities.

Such contact has long been frowned on by the Soviet secret police; British intelligence, which has co-operated with them for years against resistance in the USSR (for all the political denunciations of tyranny), is still not too happy about the implications, possibly for want of a clear political directive.

The West has never been interested in social or political change, only in military offensive and counter-offensive.



USSR 1989

THE DILEMMA facing every dictatorship is how to perpetuate its rule for ever. Stalinist-type dictatorship, once nobody succeeded in getting Stalin's absolute power, has slipped away. Stalin years ago broke the power of the Army to take over, and left only the Party. Its present power should not be minimised. But economic conditions have created more classes not prepared to acquiesce in a perpetual slide downwards, with powerless yet potentially powerful forces looking on while the country slides into being a banana republic with spaceflight and atom bombs.

Attacks on corruption, the discovery of Stalin's many crimes, opening up the Russian economy to foreign and home capitalism, realisation of the disastrous escalation of arms, the effects of the Afghan War (Russia's Vietnam), and explosive nationalism over the Soviet empire, have led to a totally changed situation in Russia. It can no longer be measured by the old yardstick.
The class struggle is hotting up inside Russia. It had been obscured by the enforced pretence that communism had been established. There have been heated arguments within the factory soviets and trade unions. Now there are strikes.

Many revived political trends are now being voiced. It is a misinterpretation to suppose that because a measure of free speech is allowed, the authorities 'have to' allow every expression of opinion. No law compels them but the class struggle in a differing form. The struggle in the factories means there are heated debates on how workers should organise: there is a major demand for return to the 'democracy' that existed after the Tsar was overthrown, before what was the October counter-revolution.

Because of these various interests and parties, factions and movements, the ruling classes need counter-balance, and they use the tried and trusted methods of the West — conservatives use State pressure and manipulation of the electoral and press propaganda process, descending to use of fascist hoodlums, racialist and even neo-Nazi parties, to prevent the workers going 'too far', and ambitious liberals try nataionalism, which can be curbed if it goes too far by the same methods.

Dear Black Flag,
I wish to comment on your article on Viraj Mendis and the RCG (no.189) which I found disappointing to say the least, from a paper that relies on in-depth investigative journalism for its various exposes.

The article, which described Viraj as an innocent duped by the RCG into being a martyr, states that he 'would not have been in danger had the RCG not built him up into a Tamil resistance fighter' and that the Sri Lankan governmment has 'no reason to take any action against him'—trotskyism being part of the establishment there.

Well, Viraj was in sanctuary for over two years, eighteen months of which anarchists from Liverpool travelled over every Wednesday night to do the overnight guard on the church. We supported Viraj because he is black and because he was under threat of deportation. We had no illusions about the RCG or the church throughout the time we were part of the VMDC.

The RCG as a party did use Viraj for their own ends, that is not in doubt, and there were serious problems with the whole approach of the defence committee which now that Viraj is in Sri Lanka needs to be aired.

However. some sanctuaries did succeed in Viraj's time and other anti-deportation campaigns, some in Liverpool, won victories whilst he was in sanctuary because they had real community backing, and because unlike the VMDC they stuck to the issue at hand. But to describe the whole Manchester sanctuary movement as a 'charade' as you did is a mistake. Fighting deportations is never a charade, however disastrous the approach of the VMDC may haver been. Fifty black people are deported every week fropm this country, not because they are members of the RCG but because they are black. It was the British State, through the Home Office, that deported Viraj, not the RCG or Trotskyism. Undoubtedly, Douglas Hurd hates communists and it is not a good idea to be 'overstaying' in this country, but membership of the RCG was the Home Office excuse to deport Viraj, not the reason. The reason was racism. This is the central point to the whole debate which we should not lose sight of.

It is a characteristic of the (needlessly) sectarian side of the anarchist movement that in the aftermath of the VMDC it is Viraj and the RCG that get the stick first. and the real and much larger enemy, the British State. second. No mention of their antics in your article.

It is one thing to dislike Trots and their methods. as I do intensely, but another to know and to explain why. One thing that did come out of the campaign was the publicisation of what was really happening in Sri Lanka—that thousands of people have been imprisoned, tortured and killed there. No evidence has come out since the lifting of the state of emergency that things are any different.
In solidarity, Tall Paul (of Liverpool Anarchist Group)

COMMENT: Our friend doesn't really criticise anything said in the article, on the contrary agrees with it to the extent of saying the problem needed to be aired. We are against deportation and waited comment until the inevitable end, due to what we called a charade and he calls a disaster. We did not blame Viraj but the RCG who used him. The campaign was confused in that it hardly came across as racism when Viraj was claiming to be a political refugee from his country of origin. It publicised what was going on in Sri Lanka—but not the role of Marxist-Leninism. It is actually the needlessly non-sectarian attitude common in many Anarchists now that hesitates to criticise Marxist-Leninists, but accepts any criticism or sabotage from them (e.g. Trots campaigned against arms to Spain, and subequent to the war even sabotaged efforts to help refugees seeking asylum, as there were compromises in entering a bourgeois anti-fascist government; trots in Sri Lanka entered a bourgeois quasi-fascist one. Militant Tendency, not RCG, are supported by the establishment there).

The Home Office did not deport Viraj because he was in the RCG, which presents no threat to them any more than it does to Sri Lanka. Nor do we address ourselves to the British State. Capitalism encourages immigration when it needs workers, soldiers or an unemployed reserve, even if racism is encouraged by the right wing to divide workers and as electoral populism, which isn't contradictory though it may look so at first sight. (For electoral reasons the word Blacks in left wing jargon seems to include Asians; but it is leftist jargon that alienates the community, whether White, Black or Asian).

CORNISH ANARCHIST GROUP

Anyone interesting in helping to found an anarchist group in Cornwall should write

c/o Plymouth Anarchists,
PO Box 105,
Plymouth, Devon.

IT'S THAT MAN AGAIN

We have received correspondence from N. Walter, but due to pressure of space publication has been defered until a later date.

Obituary

ON THE 14th July, 1944 there was one of the most dramatic moments of the Italian anarchist resistance when a huge demonstration of local women blocked the main square of Carrara, defying the German command to evacuate the town. One of those responsible was Lina Del Papa, who died this February at 75.

Her father, Ugo Del Papa, had founded the Workers Centre in the marble quarrying town of Carrara in 1901, when it was solidly anarchist (it has never completely lost its character to this day), and her companion Onofrio Lodovici was one of the Carrara eleven who fought with the Durruti column in Spain. She herself fought in Spain and subsequently in the resistance, in France as well, before returning to organise partisans in Italy, including women's groups.

Known to comrades in the international resistance by her nickname the Carrara Pasionaria (a bit unfairly bestowed, though unintentionally, in view of the contrasting role of the famous communist La Pasionaria), she was a great Anarchist fighter who inspired and participated in anti-fascist struggle for years.

ANARCHIST CONFERENCE

Anarchist students at North East London Poly have organised a conference on Sat. 27th May at West Ham Main Hall, Romford Rd, Stratford. 11am — 5pm. Stratford tube.

FEEDBACK

We welcome criticisms (and publish some in this issue from friends and enemies alike) and other letters; but please keep them short. We can't give half a page to each letter. Articles are also welcomed—but not so long as to exclude anything else! Otherwise we have to edit them.

RECLAIM MAYDAY

Mayday is workers day: a day of mourning and protest in memory of the battles of yesterday and a contribution to the present struggles and those to come. It should not be a day for overpaid trade union bureaucrats and Labour politicians to make their pompous speeches. Nor should it be a day for exhibitions of military strength as in Russia. Mayday is workers day, our day, that is why we have organised an independent march to *reclaim* Mayday. Join us. Bring banners and flags.

ASSEMBLE 10:30 AM 1st MAY 1989 AT HOLLOWAY RD TUBE MARCH 11.15 AM

Haymarket Martyrs Memorial Committee, c/o 17 Turners Road, E3.

POLL TAX - THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW CONTD.

Up and down the country many anti-Poll Tax groups are ready and organised to start the fight-back against registration. Most of our information relates to the London groups, but we are aware that the picture is similar in other areas too.

In north London, Tottenham Against The Poll Tax is compiling briefing packs for workplace and street reps and are flagging up streets to show which are covered. In South London, different tenants groups are affiliating to the main group in Lewisham and similarly in Lambeth. Other local groups in different parts of London are taking similar action and there have been recent moves to set up a federation of community resistance groups throughout the capital.
Things are moving very fast and the resistance groups have a huge task to inform people generally of the best tactics to pursue. It's obviously important that everyone is well informed of all the possibilities. If individuals opposed to the tax have not yet affiliated to a group, or got together with others to start one up, then now is the the time to do so before the registration forms get fully distributed and people start to return them. We know of at least one council—Southwark—that has already sent out registration forms one month ahead of other local authorities.

On the plus side another London borough, Greenwich, has revealed that it expects to make a loss from the Poll Tax in the first year of implementation (1990-91) because they accept that the majority of people simply won't be able to afford it. According to a leaked report the council are allegedly prepared to 'write-off' many debts and prosecutions in order not to clog up the courts.

Local councils are clearly worried that the resistance will take off, but they hope that it will not get reported. They hope that most people will be fooled into thinking that they are the only ones who are prepared to refuse to register or pay, and therefore not do so. Accordingly the anti-Poll Tax groups have an important role to play in reporting on the extent of the resistance so as to keep up morale.

Meanwhile as the anti-Poll Tax forces south of the border take on Registration, in Scotland the resistance is organising for non-payment. Over 1 million Scots have pledged not to pay. Their war will be enhanced if the resistance to Registration in England and Wales takes off.

But if there is one thing that people should remember most, it's this: once the authorities have you registered, they have you registered for life. From then on, wherever you move to, whatever your job, whether you are unemployed or out of work, they will have you until you die. The time to smash the Poll Tax is now—there may never be another chance.

HOW TO MAKE FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE

Ulster magazine purports (unconvincingly) to be the Ulster Defence Association voice, but also promotes the 'Ulster Loyalist Democratic Party'; it seems to be associated too with the National Front (the 'Flag' segment—there are now two NFs, it was the other lot who went to Libya and met Gaddafi, part-paymaster of the IRA and some trots). Ulster calls for terrorist actions on the mainland—one letter in the March issue calls for an attack on the Victoria pub, Holloway, another gleefully relates how a woman in Wrexham got a 'belt in the mouth' for singing an Irish rebel song at the Embasssy Club.

In a somewhat confused article Billy Gordon, from Liverpool, refers to 'Trotskyite anarchists' who 'when not demonstrating support for muggers, queers, child bashers and immigrant spongers like Viraj Mendis' produce *Black Flag*. Our 'Communist news sheet' (he can't even count the pages?) shouldn't have blamed the NF for involvement in the Birmingham pub bombing, he says, and calls us 'toytown trots' in the bargain. How come we got to read this paper? It was sent us with a scrawled note addressing us as 'Dear Comrades' (the worst insult of all), saying 'It's only March, but the Loyalist paras have already got eight Fenian fuckers, one of whom died holding his rosary beads... shoot to kill, ha ha'. Maybe this implies we're Catholics as well as Communists and toytown trots. He concludes 'when the UDA and co finish off the Fenian garbage they're coming to the mainland and sort the red filth out, people like you' and is signed 'Red Hand'.

So what's the silly bugger expect us to do—a Rushdie? Go play with your Loyal regalia and Nazi memorabilia! Only grown up nazis carry out killings.

Twenty years publication, only our first death threat, and that from a nutter! Where have we gone wrong?

Answers to quiz

1. The slave-owning Tsarist government supported the abolitionist North on the logic that it too opposed rebellion; the British government symnpathised with the slave-owning South, ostensibly because the USA was itself a result of one rebellion and they shouldn't object to another (in fact, because of the 'gentlemanly' affinity with the South and dislike of Northern capitalist competition).

2. The planters burned the crops to keep the price up, so the sacked workers found coffee doubly difficult to obtain.

3. For reasons of national pride, Kaiser Wilhelm pressed him forward prematurely, as the French Louis Pasteur was leading the field; Pasteur (whose son had been killed in the Franco-Prussian war) loathed Prussians and would not co-operate with Koch. Koch was found to have been mistaken and eventually Pasteur got in first with a remedy, after years of avoidable delay and continued deaths.

4. Dimitrov told the court that Communists did not use 'individual terror' while even though 'real anarchists did commit senseless acts, in court they come forward and answer for them and explain their aims'—whereas van der Lubbe refused to name anyone else involved with him in burning the Nazi Parliament, and could not have been alone—therefore, said Dimitrov, his confederates 'must have been' the Nazis themselves.

5. The fasces (a bundle of sticks used as rods by the Roman lictors—law-enforcers) symbolised the Italian law-enforcement movement after WWI, first led by the Italian poet d'Annunzio, who invented 'fascism' as a modern symbol of mock-Roman authority; it was directed against workers occupation of factories, and copied in other countries as a strike-breaking force. Early taken over by ex-socialist Mussolini, it took up some populist slogans to disguise its aims.

MAY DAY Benefit gig at the Teesside Polytechnic, Middlesbrough
with:...
The Magic Bastards
The Next World
Generic and
Aural Corpse
All proceeds go to Rock against the Poll Tax

HASSLE

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